Poisoning of Rivers by Faeces

2215. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether flush latrines are polluting and poisoning the rivers all the time, as reported in The Hindustan Times dated the 12th July, 1998;

(b) whether this system has been considered more lethal for life than nuclear bombs; and

(c) whether Government would consider alternate systems of faeces disposals in consultation with experts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) to (c) Improper excreta disposal is associated with well known health hazards including soil and water pollution. this pollution results in various diseases like typhoid, dysentries, diarrhoe, cholera, worm infestation, viral hepatitis etc., There are well established methods of excreta disposal which render the sewage harmless.

Opening of Government Hospital in Assam

2216. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Government hospital opened in the country, particularly in Assam, during the Eighth Five Year Plan, location wise;

(b) the details of such hospital as are proposed to be opened in Assam during the Ninth Five Year Plan, district-wise;

(c) the details of Government hospitals under construction at present, location-wise; and

(d) by when these hospitals are likely to start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) (a) to (d) 'Health' being a State subject under the Constitution, State Governments frame their programmes for opening of hospitals and dispensaries in their State Keeping in view their priorities and availability of resource. However, as per information compiled by Directorate General of Health Services, as on 1.1. 1996, there are 1591 hospital in the country and 268 hospital in Assam.

Observance of World Mental Health Day

2217. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the nation observed the World Mental Health Day on October 10, 1998;

(b) if so, the details of schemes and programmes, if any launched on that day for helping those suffering from mental impairment indicating Government's assessment about the number and percentage of population affected with mental health problems; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in pursuance thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) (a) to (b) Saveral organisations in different parts of the country as well as the professional body of psychiatrists observed World Mental Health Day on October 10, 1998. the theme for this year's Mental Health Day was "Human Right and Mental Health". About 1% of the population has been estimated to be suffering from various types of serious mental disorders in the country. The proportion of persons suffering from various minor mental illness, stress related and other